

of Surrey they are only 19. The population of Surrey exceeded that of Manchester, yet in seven years 16,000 persons died in Manchester over and above the deaths in Surrey. In these seven years 13,362 children in Manchester alone fell a sacrifice to known causes, which it is believed may be removed to a great extent. "Here, in the most advanced nation of Europe—in one of the largest towns of England—in the midst of a population unmatched for its energy, industry, manufacturing skill—in Manchester, the centre of a victorious agitation for commercial freedom—aspiring to literary culture—where Percival wrote and Dalton lived—13,362 children perished in seven years over and above the mortality natural to mankind."*

ARCHITECTURAL REFLECTIONS.†

It is not amongst the ruins of Greece or Rome alone that the treasures of ancient art are to be found: nor is it to any one particular style that the footsteps of investigation should be exclusively directed. A common parentage may be traced, more or less, throughout the vast family, of national peculiarity of style. Among the intricacies of pedigree the germ of the parent stock may still be discovered; but though the influence and excellence of that origin may thus be proved and acknowledged, the merits of its offspring and progeny may not be the less worthy of attention.

As well may one resolve to read no poetry but that of Chaucer, Spencer, or Milton,—no plays but those of Shakspeare, Massinger, and Ben Jonson,—no novels but those of Richardson and Fielding,—to hear no music but that of Handel or Mozart,—to gaze upon no paintings but those of Vandyke or Lely, Kaufman or Reynolds,—as to limit one's architectural models to the five orders called, *par excellence*, "the classic."

Each country of the globe presents the record of its own history, its manners, wealth, and especially its religion, in the contemplation of its architecture. The pyramids of Memphis and Gizah, the temples of Denderah and Edfou, Luxor and Carnac, and the excavations and tombs of the Thebais, its sphinxes, obelisks, and colossi; the highly decorated though barbarous pagoda and rock excavation of the Hindoo; the later mosque of the Mogul, with its pointed arches and bulbous dome; the light unsubstantial canopies and pagodas of the Chinese, strongly allied in character to those of old India, but vastly inferior both in profile and material; the transatlantic ruins of ancient Mexico; the basilica of Constantine and Greek Church of Byzantium, the connecting link between the Classic and the Gothic, the germ and parent of the numerous styles that have since emanated from its influence; the Norman portal, ponderous but imposing; the Pointed style, its taper arches and matchless tracery—the adopted of all countries, yet still exhibiting a marked difference in each; the magnificent remains of the Spanish Moor at Grenada and Cordova; the mosque of Constantinople, with its flattened cupola and clustering semi-domes; the Mahomedan dome and slender minaret of Persia; the picturesque *Hôtel de ville* of the once-powerful cities of the Low Countries; the *chefs d'œuvre* of modern Italy, France, Germany, and England;—all these, and many others, present a field for study so vast, that the length of a long life would appear to be inadequate to the task of attaining a substantial knowledge of their peculiarities.

And fifty years ago this would have been the case. The vast, but sealed volume of

architectural knowledge had not then unfolded

"her ample page,
Rich with the spoils of time;"

the pencil had not then attained its extraordinary skill in delineating; the properties of the lithographic stone were not known, nor was steam power, as applied to locomotion, dreamed of; the professors of the art, if eminent, were few, and their instructions as limited as their knowledge. But times are changed; and with the discoveries and inventions to which we have just alluded, have succeeded a spirit of emulation, a capacity for learning, and a facility for executing, that throw the operations of former years completely into the background by the comparison.

The present day presents features peculiarly its own; and should the Supreme Being permit the duration of the world so long, may, probably, two or three centuries hence, exhibit such features to posterity as shall mark a distinct epoch in the annals of art. For the past, the verdict of the world has been given—either of approval or disapproval—the arrangement of dates, styles, and periods definitively ascertained, and the progressive changes of national feature and character fully proved and recognised. For ourselves, our position cannot well be ascertained, until the present shall have become the future—until the lapse of time shall have destroyed the worthless and ephemeral in construction, silenced the jarring discord of party, abated the effects of national jealousy and predilection, buried the printed opinions of venality and favouritism in oblivion, and cast that mellow tone of antiquity over our productions that seems necessary for a cool appreciation of their merits.

That the characteristics of the present day are remarkable, nought but determined bigotry can deny. That a restless spirit of change and progression, actuates the whole world, must be admitted. We speak not of politics: there the mania of revolution and whirlwind of anarchy has swept the face of Europe with its poisonous blast, raising an ocean so turbulent, that had not the realms of Britain opposed their mighty bulwarks to stem the maddened current in its course, the world might, ere this, have been swept hopelessly and irretrievably into the threatening vortex. It is of the fine arts we will speak. The fallacy of the long received notion of considering everything of necessity perfection that bears the stamp of antiquity, and everything of equal necessity worthless that is original and novel, is daily losing ground.

"Those mumbling old antiquaries, who," as Forsyth says, "are for ever picking the bare bone of antiquity," are sad retarders and drawbacks to improvement. I speak not of those whose zealous labours have enriched the vast museum of the world with the architectural treasures of any one style or country, but of those whose bitter criticism and unsparing lash is only withheld from those reductions of the master-pieces of antiquity, whose approved and time-honoured remains forbid censure in their imitations;—works that might not be inaptly termed quotations in stone!

In "The Palace of Architecture" occurs the following reflection:—"Architecture, as the personification of a power which has never been propitiated, save by the universal and spontaneous devotion of great nations,—may be considered as dead. She lies, as it were, buried in a vast mausoleum, composed of fragments from the temples of Vishnu, Isis, Jupiter, Mahomed, and Christ; from which the dissipated states of partitioned empires have been since obtaining materials for sectarian churches, palaces, manufactories, and shops;—sometimes mixing up the fragments anyhow, just as they come to hand;—sometimes critically assorting and re-employing them in a manner which at least deserves the praise of self-consistency." In a word, the great motive power which has, more than any other, influenced the spread of invention in architecture has been superstition or religion; and since in the modern world no new religion has been able to supplant those already established, architecture may have since "served to exemplify the particular taste of a Bramante, a Palladio, or a Wren; but it has manifested the spirit of adoption rather than the power of

design; the skill which combines more than the imagination which invents."

Originality of style is not likely, therefore, to mark the particular era we live in. It is by the adaptations of the architecture of the past that we must be distinguished; it is by exhibiting the inventions of our ancestors under new lights and in new combinations that we must lay our claim to the admiration and gratitude of posterity.

Who can traverse now the face of the country without being struck with the numerous objects of stirring interest that engage his attention and arrest his progress at every step? He may search in vain for the aqueduct, that essential feature of old Italy, but in its place he will observe the viaduct, extending its endless length, saved from monotony by the inequalities of the surface it traverses,—now crossing in an arrowy line the open plain,—now hurrowing beneath the surface, or piercing the thick wood or the steep mountain's side,—now leaping the breadth of a river at a bound, or bestriding the valley upon a line of picturesque arches, finished at each end by a terminus that seems the emporium of the commerce of a whole city, and divided into distances by picturesque stations of Tudor or Italian designs. Schools, almshouses, and churches, of varied style, complete the smiling landscape.

In the great city he may miss the imposing Palazzi of Italy, the gloomy feudal retreats of the Strozzi and Riccardi,—the reminiscences of the feuds of the Guelph and Ghibellini,—the Bianchi and Neri,—but in their place he will see the elegant clubhouse—the adaptation, and perhaps improvement, upon those renowned authorities, replete with every internal comfort and elegance that modern refinement and luxury can invent or desire.

He will see bridges of solid masonry and vast span, whose continuous line of traffic, if it forbid him the pleasure of "disputing" upon them, as was the fashion with the orators and literati of ancient Rome, will put one point at least beyond dispute, that of the superiority of modern enterprise over ancient!

Churches of revived Gothic—numerous, and in many instances admirable—markets, quays, storehouses, and magazines, all unite to show the peculiar resources and features of the times.

In the provinces, vast manufactories, chimneys of surprising height, roofs of metal supported upon trusses of iron of astonishing span, girders, columns, bridges both of arch and suspension of the same material, indicate the peculiar nature of our requirements and pursuits.

But amid much that is ephemeral, and designed but as a vehicle for the furtherance of commerce, there are not wanting works of a higher nature, now in progress or completed, which cannot fail to place this country upon an equality with most of the modern nations of the world even as a land of art.

As we but now observed, an original style is not at present to be looked for, circumstances prevent it,—it is the age of adaptation, and as such must be judged. Public taste appears to be pretty evenly balanced upon the question of the relative merits of the two great divisions of style, and even those who were once the loudest in the expression of their architectural bias, have succumbed to the prevailing order of things.

The resuscitation of the Pointed style is as gratifying as the revival of the classic, nor can it require more than a liberal feeling and unbiased view of the question to determine easily where one or the other should be employed.

De Quincy, speaking of Gothic, says, "such is the nature of its decoration, that one can hardly analyze it or describe it. One can only describe that which is *ordonné*, that is to say, the result of order. But the taste of Gothic ornament is precisely that which best conveys the impression of disorder."

We will only add to this that it is a very charming disorder—a *parure negligée*, highly bewitching, whose studied but graceful freedom contrasts well with the more rigid rules of other styles.

If the genius of the architects of England

* The depth of mediæval art had not been penetrated when De Quincy wrote.—E.D.

* The provincial towns are beginning to move under the provisions of Lord Morpeth's Act. A memorial has been forwarded from Whitehaven, requesting that the preliminary inquiries may be made, on these grounds.—First, the average mortality for the seven years ending June 30th, 1848, was 308. The population according to the census of 1841, 11,854; thus making the deaths 378 in every thousand. Secondly, the supply of water is insufficient for the domestic purposes of the inhabitants. Thirdly, the total disregard of sanitation in the erection of the dwellings of the bumbler classes. Fourthly, the great want of sewers. The Newcastle and Gateshead Sanitary Association have prepared a petition to forward, and steps are in progress at Bedford to make the Act available.

† See p. 448, ante.